

April: The Family Is Central to God's Plan

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APRIL WEEK 1
The family is central to God's plan.

The Book of Mormon tells about a wicked man named Amalickiah. He wanted to destroy the Church and rule over the Nephites as their king.

Captain Moroni was a strong and righteous leader of the Nephite armies. Captain Moroni wanted to remind the people how important it was to defend their families and their faith. He tore his coat and made it into a flag, or banner. On it he wrote these words:

"In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children."

He called his banner "the title of liberty," and he fastened it on the end of a pole. Then he knelt and prayed that the people could stay free so they could still worship God and receive His blessings. Today we have something to remind us how important our families and our faith are. It is "The Family: A Proclamation to the World." Here are some of its words: "The family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children. ... The family is ordained of God."*

Because He loves us, He has given us families so that we can love and learn from one another. By following Heavenly Father's plan, families can return to Him and live with Him forever.



APRIL WEEK 2
Parents have important responsibilities in families.

When President Ezra Taft Benson was a young boy, his father was called on a mission. Ezra, the oldest child in his family, had six younger brothers and a sister. He knew that his mother needed his help to make their home a cheerful and comfortable place. He woke up early each morning to milk the cows before he went to school. His younger brothers and sister laughed as he squirted milk into their mouths when they came into the barn to watch him. Ezra comforted them when they missed their father. He even dug vegetables from a storage pit under the snow so they would have enough to eat. Ezra tried in every way to make his home a happy one.

As prophet of the Church, President Benson taught us that "our Heavenly Father loves all of His children of all nations everywhere. Because He loves us so much, He has given us loving parents who care for us and teach us. Our mothers and fathers are our first and best teachers, and what they teach us can help us to grow up to be good and useful men and women".

Our Father in Heaven has given responsibilities to each person in the family. He gave parents the responsibility to teach and care for their children. We can do our part to help our parents make our homes a happy place just as President Benson did.



After a family home evening lesson on obedience, four-year-old Brandon was anxious to try harder to obey his mom and dad. He and his mom decided that a reminder might help him. Brandon would repeat, "If I choose to obey, I'll be happy all day!"

One day Brandon wanted to play at his friend's house. He raced across the yard when suddenly the words "If I choose to obey, I'll be happy all day!" came to his mind. Remembering that he should ask his mom first, Brandon headed back to his house.

APRIL WEEK 3
Children have the responsibility to obey their parents.

When he turned eight, Brandon was baptized and received the gift of the Holy Ghost. He read in his scriptures that the Holy Ghost would show him all things he should do (see 2 Ne. 32:5). Brandon knew the Holy Ghost would remind him to follow Jesus Christ.

Our Father in Heaven has given responsibilities to each person in the family. He gave parents the responsibility to teach and care for their children. As a member of a family, you also have important responsibilities. Heavenly Father has commanded us to obey our parents. He has asked us to love and serve one another. Each family member should be helpful, cheerful, and kind to other family members. When we help family members, we are showing our love for them and for Heavenly Father.

Jesus Christ set the perfect example for us. The scriptures teach us that "blessed is every one that ... walketh in [the Lord's] ways. ... Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee". When we follow Jesus Christ, we will be happy not only all day but throughout all eternity!



"I will not take the garbage out for you....do it yourself!," Caylee said to her brother Trevin, who was two years younger than she.

"No, you won't help me, but you'd jump at a chance to help Tim Cruthers," Trevin said as he ran outside.

"It worries me, Caylee," mother said, "to see you and Trevin treat each other the way you do."

"Oh, he makes me so mad that I can't stand him!"

"Would you be willing to try an experiment—just you—without his knowing anything about it?"

"Tell me what it is first."

Mother challenged her, "No matter what Trevin does or says, you do and say only those things that show your love for him. See what happens. I'll be an interested observer."

"Oh, that would be hard. I'm not sure I could do it. Do you think he'd change? It would be good to have a brother who was a friend. You know, Addie and her brother have the best relationship with each other. Maybe she can help me. I'll think about it."

On her way to school next morning, Caylee stopped at Addie's house so they could walk together as usual. Addie was carrying a heavy load of posters. As they came out, Trevin passed by. Caylee called out to him, "Oh, Trevin, please carry my books so I can help Addie with these posters."

"Yes, I will, just like you helped me take out the garbage."

"I'm sorry about that. I'll do it tonight."

But Trevin showed no signs of having heard her.

Having missed lunch that day to prepare for a test, Caylee was very hungry when she got home. She made herself a sandwich. Just as she was about to take a bite, Trevin came in and said, "Hey there, make one of those for me."

She opened her mouth to say, "Yes, just like you carried my books," but instead she said, "Here take this one. I'll make myself another."

Trevin looked shocked. He grabbed the sandwich and ran.

A few days later, mother said to Caylee, "I think it's beginning to work, though Trevin is still suspicious of your motives."

She shook her head, "I think I feel a little better toward him. But it's even harder than I thought it would be. Once I slipped back into the old way and really let him have it."

"It will take a while for him to feel that you are sincere. But, in the meantime, I must say it is more peaceful around here."

About a week later, Caylee excitedly said to mother, "It works! You know I was doing the dishes alone. It was Emalee's turn, but she was feeling sick so dad sent her to bed. And, would you believe it, Trevin came out and said he'd help dry them. We had the best talk. I really do love him. I've learned that I am happiest when I am helping my family."